TL 1470

/* ---------- "Soeharto Invites Congress To Timor" ---------- */
Source: Kyodo, Date: 13 Nov 90,

[Brief Remark from J MacDougall:
A previous invitation to visit East Timor made to a U.S. Congressional delegation visiting Indonesia was never taken up. A U.S. Congressional delegation accompanied by relevant Indonesian- and Portuguese-language speaking staff and area experts could prove even more consequential than a Portuguese or UN mission, especially if it included some of the principal Congressmen who have followed developments in East Timor and Southeast Asia and some who have participated in similar missions to the Philippines and Central America. Any such mission should also include representatives of NGOs which regularly monitor human rights practices in Indonesia/East Timor, including those whose access to Indonesia/East Timor has been barred, limited, or impeded. If any of this materializes in a mission proposal, Soeharto will likely be greatly surprised but unable to withdraw the offer. Perhaps former President Jimmy Carter might consider visiting East Timor. This option might prove the most feasible and consequential of all given Carter's continuing willingness to make such visits to other world trouble spots. Since President Soeharto has now spoken, some Indonesian NGOs and individuals at home and abroad might also promote the proposal publicly, omething, to our knowledge, none have ever done.]

SUHARTO INVITES U.S. LEGISLATORS TO VISIT EAST TIMOR

Indonesian President Suharto on Tuesday invited U.S. legislators concerned about alleged human rights abuses in East Timor to visit the former Portugese colony, U.S. administration officials said.

Suharto said in a 20-minute meeting with U.S. Vice President Dan Quayle he had heard that several members of Congress had raised the issue of human rights violations in East Timor, and said they are welcome to inspect the situation for themselves, the officials said.

Indonesia annexed East Timor in 1976 as its 27th province, after Indonesian troops intervened and set up a provisional government when a civil war broke out between left-wing Fretilin forces demanding independence and those for integration into Indonesia following Portugal's withdrawal in 1975.

Human rights organizations estimate that as many as 100,000 people, or one sixth of the Timorese population, have died due to fighting and famine in the ensuing 14 years of civil war.

The United Nations still regards the former colony as under Portuguese administration.

Alatas for top UN post?

Source: TAPOL and The Independent of 13 November 1990.
Date: 15 November 1990.
Dateline: London.
Story type: Comment on news item.

The London-based Independent, reporting on the jockeying that is likely to surround the appointment of the UN's next Secretary-General, mentions Ali Alatas, Indonesia's Foreign Minister. as one of at least 17 names that have put forward as candidates for the post.

The paper believes that the incumbent, 70-year old Peres de Cuellar, will retire when his second term ends at the end of 1991 and argues that the post is most likely go to an African diplomat as there has never been a secretary-general from that continent.

Indonesia will no doubt push Alatas' credentials hard, arguing that he was for several years head of Indonesia's mission at the UN until his appointment as Foreign Minister in 1983, and that he has worked hard to seek a peaceful solution to the Cambodian conflict.

However, Portugal is equally likely to lobby hard against Alatas, bearing in mind the key role which the UN must still play in pushing for an act of self-determination for East Timor. Moreover, 1982 General Assembly resolution 37/30 requires the UN Secretary-General to consult with all parties directly concerned in the East Timor conflict. Having Alatas at the helm would end any chance of the East Timorese ever being brought into this process.